



County of Roanoke **PLANNING COMMISSION**

Ms. Martha Hooker, Chairman
Mr. Gene Marrano, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Wayne Bower
Mr. Rick James
Mr. Jim Woltz

Catawba District
Cave Spring District
Hollins District
Vinton District
Windsor Hills District

AGENDA **TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2014** **6:00 P.M. (4th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM 438)**

WORK SESSION

- A. Call to Order
- B. Approval of Agenda
- C. Discussion of Commercial Matching Grant Program (Richfield Retirement Project) – Megan Cronise
- D. Review of 2005 Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 1 Introduction and Chapter 2 Vision Statements) – Philip Thompson
- E. Citizens' Comments
- F. Comments of Planning Commissioners and Planning Staff
- G. Adjournment

Richfield Retirement Community Commercial Matching Grant Program Project

Roanoke County Planning Commission

Work Session

August 19, 2014

Commercial Corridor Matching Grant Program

Purpose: Encourage improvements above and beyond current building and zoning requirements to business properties for beautification and economic redevelopment of highway entrance corridors in Roanoke County.

Eligible Site Improvements:

- Façade Renovation
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Parking
- Signage
- Site Accessories



Before



After

Commercial Corridor Matching Grant Program

Funding: 50% of total project cost up to \$15,000 per property; additional funds up to a total of \$20,000 may be requested from the Board of Supervisors

Eligible Applicants:

- Property and business owners of all properties (excluding residential) in the Hollins/Williamson Road Corridor and the Route 11/460 West Corridor
- Owner must pay Roanoke County real estate taxes on the subject property
- Proposed improvements must meet the requirements of the applicable design guidelines for each area

Previous Signs



West Side

East Side



Entrance (July, 2013)



Looking West



Looking East

Entrance (July, 2013)



Looking North into the Campus

Completed Signs and Landscaping



West Side



East Side

Completed Fencing



West Fencing, Back Side



East Fencing, Front Side

Project Cost

- \$54,796.36 included sign structure, sign landscaping and fencing
- Does not include “Richfield” sign components

Project Reimbursement

- \$20,000 (maximum award and less than half of the project cost)

Questions

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Roanoke County Community Plan is a blueprint for the future growth and development of the County over the next 10-15 years. It provides direction and guidance, for both the public and private sectors, in making decisions about land development, public services and resource protection. This Plan allows decision makers to study the long-term consequences of current decisions and recognize that today's actions will impact the County for many years to come.

The Community Plan is a planning document and reflects the community's goals and visions of what the future might be. It allows the Board of Supervisors to present a snapshot of the County's long range goals, policies and strategies to the community. This includes those involved in private land development, neighborhood organizations and civic groups, neighboring jurisdictions, County departments, commissions and boards and the general public. It also provides those in the land development process the opportunity to anticipate Board decisions and to actively work in concert with the Plan rather than in conflict with it.

The Community Plan is a public document, developed with a great deal of public participation. It encourages individual participation in public affairs and particularly the long-range planning process of the County. It also ensures citizens that decisions based on the Plan are well-thought out and in the best interests of the County as a whole.

The Roanoke County Community Plan was developed in accordance with Chapter 15.2 of the *Code of Virginia*, Local Planning Legislation, Article 3, The Comprehensive Plan, which requires that:

"The local (planning) commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction."

"At least once every five years the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local (planning) commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan."

The foundation of this Community Plan is the community's vision for the future documented in the *Vision Report, The Changing Century - Roanoke County 2010*. The research, debate, discussion, thought and commitment that went into the visioning process are articulated and reflected in this Plan. The following components of the Plan support the community's vision:

- Land use, community facilities and resource preservation issues - These general, community wide issues affect the entire community.
- Future Land Use Guide - This chapter includes land use designations and policies.

- Community Planning Areas - The future land use maps are included in this chapter along with critical neighborhood issues and resources.
- Community Plan Implementation - The final chapter includes work item priorities.

THE COMMUNITY PLAN PROCESS

History

Roanoke County has a long history of comprehensive planning. In 1939 the County established the Planning Commission. Within the next year the county's first Community Plan was adopted and in 1941 the first zoning ordinance was in place.

In 1974 Roanoke County adopted the second Community Plan and in 1983 a general revision to that plan was begun. Two years later the third Community Plan was adopted by the County. The community lead visioning process was begun in 1995 and at its conclusion, in the summer of 1996, an intensive community involvement process was begun to develop the 1998 Community Plan.

Process

The community involvement process used in developing the Community Plan is, in many ways, as important to the credibility and value of the plan as the final document itself. The Plan must reflect the community's value and be open to all citizens of the County in order to be called a success. It cannot be a reflection of only a minority of viewpoints or special interest groups.

Over the past three years, Roanoke County has been involved in an extensive outreach program to involve its citizens in the development of a new Community Plan. The first component of this outreach program was the visioning process. In February 1995 the visioning process formally began with a community values survey. This scientifically-valid telephone survey questioned 500 county residents about public policy issues and assessed the relative importance of these issues. The visioning process continued throughout the spring and summer and eventually involved more than 800 citizens in the development of a vision of what Roanoke County could be like in the year 2010. This component of the citizen outreach program was concluded in June 1996 with the publishing of the *Vision Report, The Changing Century - Roanoke County 2010*.

The second component of the outreach program was to develop a neighborhood-based citizen participation element. This element was designed to identify issues at the neighborhood level and to relate the findings of the vision process to each neighborhood. To accomplish this task the Board of Supervisors appointed a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) consisting of 24 citizens - two from each of the twelve community planning areas. The CAC held their first meeting in August 1996. The charge to the CAC was to formulate a citizen participation process that would effectively involve a

broad spectrum of county citizens in the comprehensive planning process. In addition, the goal was to develop a citizen involvement structure that would continue to be involved in county planning at all levels - from the development of neighborhood plans to

rezoning issues. The purpose was to integrate active, concerned citizens into the planning process thereby increasing the level of commitment to the long-range plan and ensuring future accountability to the plan.

The CAC met during the fall of 1996 and by December developed a citizen participation process. This process involved the creation of neighborhood councils in each of the county's 12 community planning areas. The CAC appointed local citizens and leaders of community-based organizations to serve on the councils. The CAC's objectives for the neighborhood council process were:

To assure that the Community Plan reflects the desires of the majority of citizens for the future of Roanoke County and to expand the sphere of influence the Community Plan will have in guiding decisions in the future for our Roanoke County community.

The neighborhood councils began meeting in January 1997. Over the next four months they worked to identify critical land use, resource preservation and public facility issues in their neighborhoods. These extensive lists of issues were later prioritized by council members. Secondly, the councils mapped cultural, historical and natural resources that added uniqueness, beauty and a sense of place to their communities. The final component of their work was to identify examples of design elements, located in their neighborhoods, such as building size and mass, building architecture, landscaping, parking design, signage, materials and colors that are visually appealing.

In May 1997 a community forum was held to exhibit the results of the neighborhood council process. This meeting was an open house with booths that displayed the work and maps produced by each council. Representatives of various special interest groups made presentations to the Planning Commission and the CAC.

The major components of the Community Plan reflect the results of the visioning process as well as the work of the CAC and neighborhood councils. The first component provides background, goals, objectives, issues and opportunities and implementation strategies in the areas of land use, community facilities and resource preservation. The second component is the Future Land Use Guide. Land use guidelines and policies that reflect the results of the visioning process are outlined. The third component is the Community Planning Area Analysis. This section takes an in-depth look at each of the 12 community planning areas around the County. Future land use maps are displayed in this section. The final chapter of the Plan includes implementation strategies.

PLAN UPDATES

Every five years the Community Plan will be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure that it is consistent with the overall community vision. This review process will provide the opportunity to analyze and address changes in the community and to update statistical data and implementation strategies. It will also provide the opportunity to measure progress and make adjustments, where necessary, toward the implementation strategies recommended in the 1998 plan.

PLAN AMENDMENTS

The Roanoke County Community Plan is a general planning document that is subject to interpretation. It is intended to guide future land use development in the County but is not fixed in place. Therefore, proposed amendments to the Community Plan will be received and reviewed twice annually in the months of January and July. Amendments to the Roanoke County Community Plan may be initiated by any citizen, the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, any county landowner or the Secretary to the Planning Commission.

Amendment applications must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The subject property was misinterpreted or overlooked in the Community Plan.
- Significant changes have occurred in the condition of surrounding lands.
- The requested amendment will significantly enhance other goals of the Community Plan.

Amendment applications will be considered based on the preceding qualifications. The Planning Commission will review the application, hold a public hearing and recommend to the Board of Supervisors whether to consider the amendment. The Planning Commission may, at their discretion, hold a community meeting or convene a meeting of the appropriate neighborhood council. If recommended by the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing and vote to accept, deny, or modify the amendment and forward its order to the Secretary to the Commission. The Board of Supervisors retains the right to initiate an amendment to the Community Plan at any time. Any amendment should be determined to be consistent with the remaining goals of the Community Plan and the overall community vision.

CHAPTER 2

VISION STATEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

In 1995 the citizens of Roanoke County initiated a strategic planning process called visioning. The purpose of this process was to build a vision for the future of Roanoke County that is based on community consensus and reflects the community's values.

In March 1995 a thirteen-member citizen Steering Committee was formed to administer and guide the vision process. The Steering Committee formed ten focus groups to discuss and prepare recommendations on the following topics: Agriculture and Forestry, Economic Development, Public Education, Technology, Resource Preservation, Transportation, Growth Management and Planning, Government Relations, Recreation and Culture and Housing. These focus groups involved over 200 citizen volunteers.

The focus groups met throughout the summer of 1995 and in the fall presented their recommendations to the Steering Committee and Board of Supervisors. There were five key issues, or principles of action, that emerged from the focus group reports. These issues cut across the thinking that County citizens brought to the vision process and are as follows:

COMMUNITY-WIDE THEMES

1. Regionalism - The County must take the lead in finding new and innovative ways to look beyond its political boundaries for solutions to the challenges of the next century.
2. Sustainability - Recognizing that our natural systems are vital to providing both economic needs and quality of life for all citizens, sustainable development has been incorporated into County planning -- meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
3. Community Identity - Roanoke County citizens identify very closely with their neighborhoods and school districts. Efforts must be made to preserve the elements of community identity that provide gathering places for the exchange of information and support.
4. Scenic Beauty - The mountains that surround the County provide a sense of place and are a source of beauty, recreational activity and inspiration. Steps must be taken to develop sound conservation policies for our dwindling farm lands, mountainsides and ridges, rivers and streams, soil and air. These resources are considered by many to be our region's greatest asset.

5. Quality of Life - The citizens of Roanoke County recognize that there exists a fragile balance between economic growth and prosperity and the preservation of a way of life that is cherished by many. Proactive steps must be taken to manage growth in a positive way - to act conservatively and with deliberation when making decisions that will affect our high quality of life and that of our children's children.

In addition to these five broad community-wide themes each focus group developed a vision statement that reflects their discussions about the future of Roanoke County.

VISION STATEMENTS

The following vision statements represent the work of the focus groups and are reprinted here exactly as they were developed by each group.

Government Relations

1. In 2010, Roanoke County is one of a group of regional independent counties and cities, that choose to practice - as an aggressive and proactive policy - broad based, regional collaboration and cooperation in: 1) meeting the current day-to-day needs of the citizens of Roanoke County, and 2) preparing for the challenges and opportunities of the future. In these cooperative efforts, Roanoke County government leads the way, thereby ensuring the prosperity and happiness of the citizens of Roanoke County.

Resource Preservation

1. In 2010, Roanoke County has incorporated principles of sustainability into County ordinances. These principles will maximize energy efficiency and minimize waste and pollution. To assist with this effort, the County has adopted and enacted local interpretations of the recommendations of the "Blueprint for Sustainable Development of Virginia," while bolstering industry through a variety of incentives to adhere to these standards.
2. In 2010, Roanoke County continues to support the educational efforts of Explore Park and includes environmental education in the public school curriculum.
3. In 2010, Roanoke County has enacted ordinances and programs to preserve the integrity of the surrounding mountains and open space. These include mountainside, ridgeline and natural resource protection.
4. In 2010, Roanoke County has identified the area's diverse flora and faunal resources by means of a comprehensive survey and makes use of this information in designating sites to be protected as preserves, parks, greenways and other natural corridors connecting critical habitats.

5. In 2010, Roanoke County has established tax incentives to encourage landowners to dedicate their mountain land for scenic and conservation easements. This has been supplemented by purchases of land by a Natural and Scenic Resources Foundation - a local land trust.
6. In 2010, Roanoke County has participated in a regional effort to identify and protect viewsheds along the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Appalachian Trail.
7. In 2010, Roanoke County has established sound growth management policies that preserve the region's scenic assets and natural resources while allowing residential development that includes open spaces, parks, cluster development and rural villages.
8. In 2010, Roanoke County continues to recognize the economic and scenic value of its farm lands and has actively participated in promoting the economic viability of the rural lifestyle.
9. In 2010, Roanoke County citizens exhibit a strong public and private sector commitment to the preservation of Roanoke County's distinctive cultural heritage -- its historic buildings and landscapes, archaeological sites and folk traditions. Recognizing that the architectural and archaeological records of this valley lend character and identity to our area, historic preservation has become an important tool for economic development. Through efforts to identify heritage resources, through cultural heritage education in the public schools and through cooperative efforts with other groups, the County has, over the last 15 years, set the standard for a sound preservation ethic.
10. In 2010, Roanoke County has implemented the "Recommendations for Planning" produced as a result of the architectural survey of 1991-1992. The County has also initiated a similar archaeological survey.
11. In 2010, Roanoke County community libraries have established local archives which house video and audio tape oral histories, copies of family trees, diaries, and pertinent newspaper articles and books that document each community's unique history.
12. In 2010, Roanoke County has mountain festivals, jamborees, fiddler conventions, story telling festivals, and pow-wows that are used to preserve interest in and knowledge of local folk traditions.

Housing

1. In 2010, Roanoke County has developed incentives and a sliding scale of fees to encourage affordable housing. Housing costs have been addressed by controlling

utility connection fees, erosion control requirements and waste disposal options.

2. In 2010, Roanoke County has a diverse housing stock meeting the demands of current and future residents. Dwellings are available in a range of prices, styles and designs to accommodate students, single persons, the elderly and families. Alternatives to single family ownership are being met by an adequate supply of apartments, duplexes, attached housing, senior services and nursing homes for rent.
3. In 2010, Roanoke County has managed a healthy economic growth while protecting and maintaining its natural resources. Through careful planning and orderly development, our natural resources have been protected to ensure the quality of life for future generations. Open spaces and greenways have been provided through the use of cluster development and innovative site design concepts.
4. In 2010, Roanoke County has taken a leadership role in valleywide cooperative efforts to hold the cost of public services to a relatively low level. Services have been extended, in a planned and orderly manner, to meet housing demands.

Transportation

1. In 2010, Roanoke County roads are well maintained. New roads are initiated and planned in cooperation with VDOT and with a high level of citizen participation. Transportation planning is carried out in conjunction with the County Comprehensive Plan. New roads are designed to accommodate large vehicles and incorporate new technology wherever possible. The design and construction of new roads are accomplished in an environmentally sensitive manner, protecting natural resources and minimizing various forms of pollution.
2. In 2010, Roanoke County, Roanoke City and Salem City have encouraged the growth of public transit throughout the Roanoke Valley. An active and successful public relations campaign has resulted in increased ridership. Public transit is now a vital link in the Valley's multi-modal transportation network.
3. In 2010, Roanoke County has incorporated the efficient movement of freight into the overall transportation system design. The new Inland Port has given southwest Virginia's industries a promising global connection.
4. In 2010, Roanoke County has incorporated the use of bicycle trails, pedestrian walkways and greenways into the transportation network.
5. In 2010, Roanoke County has embarked on a multi-purpose light rail project. This project serves as a valuable transportation and recreational facility for residents and visitors alike.

Growth Management and Planning

1. In 2010, Roanoke County growth management provides for greenways and open space as an integral part of communities and individual lifestyles.
2. In 2010, Roanoke County has addressed the impacts of strategies to provide for sustainability within growth management.
3. In 2010, Roanoke County communities have small commercial nodes and business opportunities that serve local areas. This strategy has encouraged and enabled citizens to use alternative forms of transportation such as pedestrian corridors, bicycle paths and public transit.
4. In 2010, Roanoke County allows flexibility, within a consistent framework of sustainable development, to encourage community redevelopment, commercial development, infill development and industrial revitalization while preserving neighborhood stability and property values. This planning process is successful due to extensive community and private sector involvement.
5. In 2010, Roanoke County transportation planning is an integral part of growth management strategies. Following through with a trend begun in 1995, Roanoke County citizens have continued to be pro-active participants in the transportation planning process.
6. In 2010, Roanoke County growth management strategies and sustainability are guided and measured by a system of benchmarks established with citizen input. This results in a highly involved citizenry who are knowledgeable in planning principles, who proactively participate in the planning process, and who believe they can influence the process.

Agriculture and Forestry

1. In 2010, Roanoke County has taken action to identify and establish distinct rural areas worthy of preservation that will balance the rights of property owners while protecting the productive value of rural lands.
2. In 2010, Roanoke County has implemented policies to tax rural land on its specific value for agriculture and/or forestry production.
3. In 2010, Roanoke County has taken action to reinforce the "right to farm" and there exists a high level of mutual respect among farmers, non-farm owners and rural visitors of individual property rights, responsibilities and privacy.

4. In 2010, Roanoke County has established markets for small- scale farm and forestry products that support and sustain a viable rural land-based economy and robust farmers' markets in the Valley.
5. In 2010, Roanoke County continues to value, protect and preserve the scenic vistas, water resources and other important natural and cultural resources of the rural areas. There continues to be strong recognition that these resources are critical components of the quality of life of the region.
6. In 2010, Roanoke County has established and has been operating a level of public services, particularly fire and rescue, to the rural areas that is appropriate and consistent with the needs of an aging rural population.
7. In 2010, Roanoke County has established mechanisms so that rural residents are directly represented, consulted, advised and involved in their local government.

Economic Development and Tourism

1. In 2010, Roanoke County has played a major role in developing the Roanoke Valley into a center of industrial and commercial technology by adequately funding the Industrial Development Authority, enabling them to acquire property and providing the infrastructure to encourage economic growth.
2. In 2010, Roanoke County and the surrounding areas have become a natural playground for visitors and residents. The local governments have provided the necessary infrastructure to permit full usage and enjoyment of our scenic resources - both private and public - such as a regional greenway system, pedestrian-friendly roads, campgrounds and recreational vehicle parking areas. Strong incentives have been put into place to encourage developers to include dedicated lands and connected greenways in all new development projects.
3. In 2010, Roanoke County has taken the lead to preserve our most valuable natural asset, the scenic environment and natural ridge lines of the mountains surrounding the Roanoke Valley.

Recreation and Culture

1. In 2010, Roanoke County - through unique initiatives and as a result of reciprocal arrangements and partnership efforts with neighboring local governments and private entities- is nationally known as a preeminent East Coast recreational and cultural center and is the major recreational and cultural center on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Awareness of the County's unique and high-quality recreational and cultural programs is reflected in large audiences, a high level of individual

participation and volunteer activity, broad-based financial support, a healthy citizenry and increased tourism.

Technology and Communications

1. In 2010, Roanoke County provides its citizens opportunities to interface with each other, the capability to access local and global community services through the latest communications technologies and encourages - through both public and private means - the use of the latest technologies to enhance the quality of life in the Roanoke Valley.
2. In 2010, Roanoke County encourages technological improvements/innovations in manufacturing, power transmission, communications, commerce and transportation to reserve and enhance the natural resources of the Roanoke Valley. Roanoke County facilitates a managed technological environment that balances education, productivity, social skills, health and the ecosystem.
3. In 2010, Roanoke County affords its citizens opportunities - through technical schools, extension programs, and a four-year college of higher learning - to obtain the technological skills required to work and function in a rapidly changing world.

Public Education

1. In 2010, Roanoke County provides access to world-class educational services to all citizens. The educational focus is to prepare learners for the work place and to develop in them characteristics of responsible, productive members of society for whom learning is a lifelong endeavor.